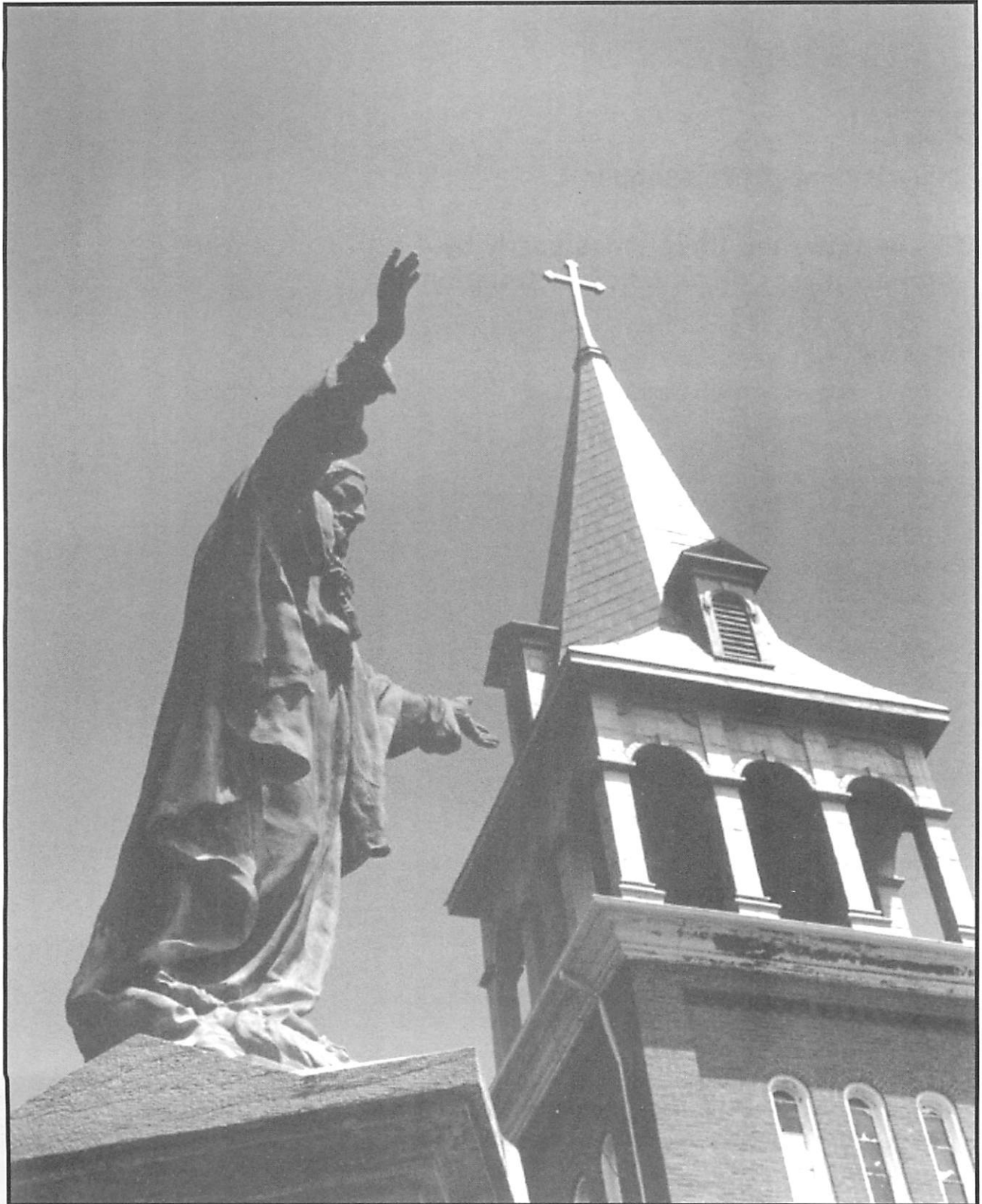


ACORN



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The Journal of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario





ACORN

Fall 2001 Volume XXVI, Number 4

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From the Editor

Great news about tax incentives!

On November 6 Ontario Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty introduced a bill in the Ontario Legislature that, among other things, would provide *property tax* relief to owners of heritage properties.

The 2001 Ontario Budget included a proposal to give municipalities the ability to provide property tax relief to owners of buildings that are designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* as being of architectural or historical value.

Over the late summer and fall the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Recreation consulted with a range of stakeholders, including the ACO, to develop eligibility criteria and a relief mechanism that would be equitable for property owners and administratively feasible for municipalities.

The resulting legislation would amend the *Municipal Act* to provide local municipalities with the flexibility to offer tax relief suited to local needs and circumstances. The Bill is expected to receive Royal Assent before December 31, meaning that a local tax relief measure could be introduced by municipalities in the 2002 taxation year.

The bill is currently available on-line at www.ontla.on.ca – the property tax section is under Part XVII relating to the *Municipal Act*, section 162.

And, on the *income tax* front, it appears the federal government is getting close to announcing a tax credit scheme for heritage places along the lines of the highly successful U.S. program. To be eligible, properties would have to be listed on a new National Register of

Historic Places. The register and accompanying conservation standards for eligible work are under development in co-operation with the provinces and territories.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Nick Hill, a proud preservationist and wonderful man who was a friend to many of us.

Dan Schneider



President's Message

The hot, dry days of summer are but a memory and, as I write this, our trees and gardens are getting the rain that they need in order to be in peak form next year.

Congratulations to our Publications Committee for publishing our first-ever colour cover for the last issue of ACORN, and thank you to Toronto Region Branch for their financial assistance in this endeavour. We have received many compliments on the "new look" and requests for future colour covers. I am sure others will be produced as finances permit.

The Publications Committee also deserves kudos for the excellent publication of *York County Mouldings*. The book launch was hosted by Heritage Toronto on November 9. This book is sure to become a "must have" reference book for anyone in the restoration field.

The new members of our Executive have jumped in with both feet and have been working diligently on our behalf. We have a wealth of talent and experience working for us and this will enable us to continue to promote the conservation of Ontario's built and natural heritage.

The operative word these days is partnerships, partnerships,

partnerships!! And the ACO is progressing very well in this area. We have had several meetings with other organizations – discussing our common interests and possible joint projects.

Our Lost Buildings Study, co-ordinated by Professor Robert Shipley of the University of Waterloo School of Planning, is now a reality. On August 15, the Ontario Trillium Foundation confirmed approval for funding of this study and more than 20 communities throughout Ontario are participating. We and our partners, the Ontario Heritage Foundation and Community Heritage Ontario, all feel that this study will provide us with the statistics necessary to show the various levels of government how and why our precious building stock is being destroyed. We hope to have the results published by Heritage Day 2002.

The provincial government is proceeding with the previously announced tax relief for heritage buildings. The bill has been introduced in the Legislature and we hope to hear shortly that it has received Royal Assent. The government is to be congratulated for proceeding with this legislation.

In October, Christopher Borgal and I represented the ACO at the Heritage Canada Conference, "Conservation Pays," in Toronto. This year's subject was very timely and provided us with many ideas from experience in this country and around the world. The walking tour of Old Town was very interesting and informative. Hopefully other communities will put together a Heritage Landscape Guide for the use of professionals and tourists alike. Our congratulations to Brampton journalist, Pamela Norton, who is the recipient of the first Heritage Canada Journalism Award. Our congratulations also to Dorothy Duncan, who received the Lieutenant Governor's Award for her 40 years of work in the heritage field. These conferences are always worthwhile—enabling everyone to exchange ideas and recharge our batteries.

Our annual Gala Dinner was held on November 10. Please read further in this issue for a report on the dinner and the text of guest speaker Allan Gotlieb's remarks. Our thanks to Mr. Justice John Morden, who arranged for the use of the University Club of Toronto for this year's dinner, to the many sponsors and donors who contributed to the evening, and to the many volunteers who ensured its success.

It is with regret that we have accepted the resignation of our Executive Director, Patricia Neal. Pat has been with us for the past two years and has been a real asset to the ACO. Her restoration and planning knowledge and administrative skills have enabled us to prosper and grow. Pat will be the new Executive Director for the Ontario Historical Society. It has been a joy to work with Pat and we wish her well in her new position. Our loss is the OHS's gain. We hope to have a new Executive Director in place early in the new year.

Our 2002 Conference and Annual Meeting will be held in Perth—dates and topic to be announced later.

Our thanks to all of you for your continued support and our best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Pat Malicki

Report from the Executive Director

I am happy to report that our application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation to fund a study on the loss of significant heritage buildings was approved in late August. Karen Reyburn has been hired as Research Assistant to Professor Robert Shipley and volunteers across the province are already at work collecting data. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation in funding this research project.



George Duncan autographs a copy of *York County Mouldings, From Historic Interiors* for Mary Angela Tucker at the book launch on November 9, 2001

The official launch of ACO member George Duncan's publication *York County Mouldings From Historic Interiors* took place at "The Banking Hall" in Toronto on Friday, November 9, 2001. It was a great celebration with more than 65 people in attendance to hear the author's remarks and purchase signed copies of what may be *the* reference work on mouldings in Canada, and perhaps North America. *York County Mouldings* was made possible, in part, through the financial support of the Pennsylvania German Folklore Society – York Chapter, Goldsmith Borgal & Company Architects, the Markham District Historical Society, the Vaughan Township Historical Society, Pleasance Crawford, George and Linda Duncan, and the Richmond Hill Historical Society. Thank you! I would also like to thank our friends at Heritage Toronto for hosting the launch. We are fortunate to have such wonderful support from our heritage partners. Congratulations to our Publications



Chris Borgal, Cathy Naismith and Mell Chapple at the November Gala Dinner
photo: Dan Schneider

Committee and its chair, Mary Angela Tucker, for this new release.

Our Gala Dinner and Silent Auction took place the following evening at the University Club of Toronto. Organizing such an event would be an overwhelming task without the hard work of the ACO Executive, Branch councils, and our volunteers. A special thank you to Caron Bailey, Kathleen Brent, Mell Chapple, Linda Duncan, Don Holland, Pat Malicki, Julie Saunders and Mary Angela Tucker for your help during the evening. The many contributors to our Silent Auction will be named in a future issue of ACORN but we are most grateful for your support. And finally, a huge thanks to our corporate sponsors: Goldsmith Borgal & Company Architects, North Country Slate, Oh Canada Eh?! Dinner Show Niagara Falls, Anne and Ross Robinson, and CDS Group of Companies/CDS Building Movers. As of this writing, we still await word from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Recreation with regard to our annual Operating Grant application. The timing of this grant is quite critical, yet it seems to arrive later each year.

Our annual fall fundraising campaign will soon be underway. Please remember the ACO on your holiday gift list this year. We appreciate your generosity and you will appreciate the benefits at tax time!

Pat Neal

Allan Gotlieb Speaker at November Gala Dinner

*Ontario Heritage Foundation
Chairman Allan Gotlieb was the
guest speaker at the ACO Annual
Fundraising Dinner held November 10,
2001, at the University Club in Toronto.*

Thank you for the invitation to speak to you this evening. It is always a pleasure to speak to people who share the same beliefs and goals—in this case, the preservation of our built heritage. And indeed, the ACO and the Ontario Heritage Foundation have worked together for years. We value our partnership with you. So I welcomed your invitation to speak this evening.

I have long been a supporter of the arts and heritage, and now, as Chairman of the Ontario Heritage Foundation as well as Chairman of Sotheby's Canada and the Donner Canadian Foundation, I find myself at the centre of a happy confluence of interests. I have also long cared about urban design and I believe there is a strong connection between good urban design and heritage preservation. There are a number of defining factors which, in my view, are necessary conditions for greatness in a city. Economic primacy, cultural diversity, livability, outstanding cultural institutions, bold architecture—these are all essentials. The sixth and final condition is the most indefinable one—the ability to astonish and surprise. All of these conditions, when met, will create a great city—a city beloved by its inhabitants and sought out by people everywhere—from near, far and very far. In fact, the simplest test of whether or not a city is great is whether it is considered, in itself, a destination.

A destination city invariably evokes distinct associations in people's minds. Ask them why they visit, and they'll list many of the factors I've noted above. Everyone thinks of cities in terms of their distinctive qualities—those elements that define a place, make it special, and set it apart. Cities like New York, Paris and London, Chicago, San Francisco, Barcelona and Prague, are great destinations because they have their own very unmistakable personality, one that distils the cultural achievement of a distinct branch of human civilization.

Toronto has much to be proud of. Toronto, in important respects, surpasses the achievement of most

North American and other cities. I am thinking, in particular, of Toronto's livability—our great residential neighbourhoods, our exuberant Victorian and Edwardian domestic architecture, the vital precincts within the city, the teeming intensity of our street-life, the diversity of our *quartiers*, the multicultural face of our human landscape.

Yet, there are obstacles that stand in the way of reaching our true potential. To define these impediments, to put them into simple words, is not an easy task. Perhaps it is useful to frame the issue in terms of tolerances. Canadians have a worldwide reputation—perhaps justly so—for being a tolerant people. This helps us understand the point of view of other nations and perhaps has contributed over time to our impressive role in diplomacy and international affairs.

But tolerance is not always a good thing and sometimes tolerance can be harmful. In fact there are four tolerances which I think are incompatible—indeed, fatal—to the creation and maintenance of a great city.

- The first fatal tolerance is for mediocrity in architecture.
- The second is tolerance for loss of built heritage.
- The third is tolerance for degradation of public spaces.
- And the fourth is a tolerance for destruction of natural beauty.

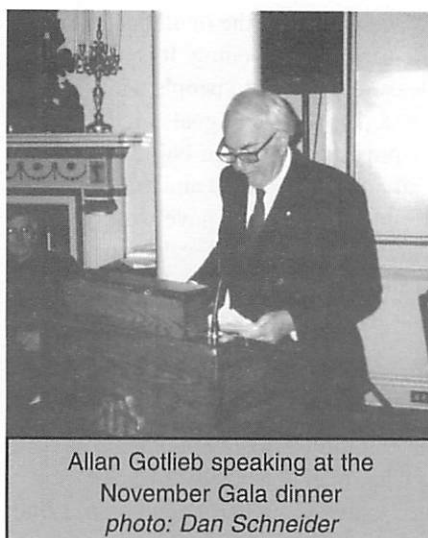
In these four zones of tolerance are to be found the enemies of Toronto's promise. First, in its modern and contemporary buildings, Toronto is, alas, awash in mediocrity. More than any other single factor today, great buildings, great acts of creation by talented architects, make a city an international destination. They are the hallmark of the astonishing city. Think of New York. Think of Chicago. Think of London, Paris, Barcelona and now Berlin. Toronto should be in the very vanguard of international capitals in encouraging gifted architects from home and abroad to compete in

building our major public and commercial buildings. We can be proud that much of our architecture was of notable distinction in the past. We have had spurts when we have honoured creativity and wanted to grace our city. The Toronto landscape still displays some marvelous 19th century structures—for example, Queen's Park, University College, Victoria College (can you see it?), the old Knox College (badly neglected), and the Old City Hall. We are home to some splendid buildings of the inter-war period such as Union Station and the art deco Bank of Commerce.

In the mid-post World War II period we saw another burst of creativity and distinction. The new City Hall, corporate and commercial buildings such as the bank towers of Mies Van der Roe and I.M. Pei, the Eaton Centre and more recently Calatrava's vaulted Arcade in B.C.E. Place all attest to the accomplishments of distinguished foreign and Canadian architects. All contribute enormously to the uniqueness of our built environment. Nevertheless, for reasons I fail to understand, our architectural ambitions in recent years have been lacklustre, to say the least.

I speak here, let me emphasize, of the ambitions not of our architects, but of those who develop our city, corporate Toronto, and the public and private institutions of our province. How many great buildings have been constructed in Toronto in the past 20 years? How can we explain the paralysis that has afflicted the building of a grand Opera House worthy of this city? Where are our glorious new museum structures, burgeoning everywhere except Toronto? How can one explain the fact that the record of the University of Toronto as a patron of architecture since the Second World War has been so consistently mediocre? Are Torontonians aware that many of the leading universities of the West are studded with the work of great architects?

I believe the University of Toronto has,



Allan Gottlieb speaking at the November Gala dinner
photo: Dan Schneider

with a few notable exceptions, failed to appreciate the importance of inspired architectural achievement in the making of a great academic institution. In the U.S., Louis Kahn has built at Yale, Philip Johnson at Dumbarton Oaks, James Stirling, Le Corbusier and Charles Gwathmey at Harvard, Michael Graves at Emory and Peter Eisenman at Ohio State. And the list grows and grows. It would seem that at the University of Toronto the stewardship of the physical environment in which people teach, study, learn and live is not seen as a core function. Where is the recognition that inspiration comes as much from what the eye beholds as from the knowledge the mind acquires? Cities similar in scale to Toronto or smaller have understood the power and purpose of great architecture—as well as its economic significance. They have shown, and are showing more and more, how architecture can be the engine of urban rebirth.

Frank Gehry's Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao is much cited but not unique in this respect. But it does show how the economy of an entire region can be revitalized through cultural tourism. In Toronto and in the province, we are facing a failure of leadership and commitment. Where are the voices in support of excellence, of our civic leaders, our private patrons, our corporate captains? They are not being heard.

This takes me to our heritage. A great

city is, of course, built on a blend of the best of the old and new. Every great city has streetscapes composed of new, recent, and old spaces. This is one of the things that make a city a vibrant organism, generating growth and change. There is an urban archaeology that is evident to any interested observer—artefacts from different eras, juxtaposed, each with its own historical logic, all working together to form collectively a unique urban space. The preservation of our domestic architecture and cultural landscapes in many parts of Toronto, such as the Annex and Cabbagetown, is a tribute to the private initiative of thousands of Torontonians. We have also preserved many important buildings from our Victorian past—I have cited several and could include several more such as St. Lawrence Hall and the Flat Iron Building. But over the years Toronto has lost many precious parts of its architectural legacy—grand mansions like Chorley Park, historic skyscrapers like the Temple Building, and great public buildings like the original asylum of the Queen Street Mental Health Centre. We are poorer for these losses. The Conservancy is to be congratulated for its lost buildings study. You have our strong support for this distressing but highly important task.

We cannot simply blame greedy developers and demolition crews for our lost heritage. They do not materialize out of nowhere. I would argue that it is a character issue. The root of the problem is that many people don't value our historic architecture. Too often, our old public and commercial and grand residential buildings are allowed to decline in a gradual, graceless downward spiral. Or else we just tear them down. As all of you know, under Ontario law, a developer—any owner—can tear down a heritage building if he waits six months. The *Ontario Heritage Act* empowers municipal governments to recognize buildings and areas having historical and architectural importance, but it does not give to city councils the required tools to effectively protect a

community's heritage. Council has no control when it comes to preventing demolition of "designated" historical buildings. At best council can delay the issuance of a demolition permit. After a statutory waiting period the owner can go ahead with demolition. We have no ability to prevent it. This is a major weakness in heritage legislation in our province. It needs to be corrected.

The city's built heritage comprehends not just its architecture, but its public spaces in all of its forms and features. Take, for example, that most urbane feature of urban life: the public park. Think of the public parks of London and Paris and of Central Park in New York. When we look closely at our own downtown we can see that we have a legacy of formal park spaces that were planned to relieve the grey monotony of urban streets. These include Queen's Park, Moss Park, Trinity Bellwoods, the Grange Park, and Allan Gardens. The legacy of nineteenth-century ambitions to green the city, these special places still have the potential to play a significant role in our urban life. Allan Gardens, with its wonderful Edwardian conservatory, is one of my favourite examples. Originally it and Moss Park were components of a larger plan, still evident in the surrounding streetscape, that endowed the fashionable Jarvis Street residential district with a special character.

When you look at a map of the city you can see a pattern of formal axes, squares and crescents around Allan Gardens that reflects indebtedness to English Georgian planning principles. The portion of the site donated by the Honourable William Allan as a civic park has played a significant role in the history of Toronto. Once a focus of our public life, Allan Gardens has gradually slipped out of the public eye and general use. Regrettably, it is more a refuge for the homeless or drug-users than a shared public civic space and an educational amenity. It is a classic example of how we lose our urban heritage bit by bit.

It does not have to be this way. In New York City, Bryant Park, behind the New York Public Library in the heart of mid-town Manhattan, was turned from a dangerous no-man's land into a beautiful civic space packed with cafés, charming promenades and gardens. It is now teeming with life and enjoyed by workers on their lunch breaks, families on outings, indeed, by all manner of New Yorkers. This remarkable transformation resulted from private initiative and sponsorship. There are stirrings in the community around Allan Gardens that suggest something similar could happen there. The City of Toronto is working with many interested people and groups to develop a plan to bring the public back to this public park. In the face of so much indifference, it is a daunting task.

But other cities have successfully revived their historic conservatories. We should make the 100th anniversary of the Allan Gardens conservatory—2008—the target date for the regeneration and rebirth of Allan Gardens. This could be a significant step in the revitalization of downtown Toronto. The Ontario Heritage Foundation applauds and supports the city's initiative.

And what of Toronto's natural heritage? Twenty-nine deep ravines are embedded in the geography of our city, 'a secret Toronto' unknown to most visitors and perhaps many residents too. Our unique topography makes us, as one observer put it, 'an upside down San Francisco.' Far from celebrating this unique aspect of our city, we have converted our ravines into thoroughways so people and goods can be transported in and out of the city as rapidly as possible.

And, as incomprehensible as it is to me from a natural heritage standpoint, in a city that now eagerly espouses good environmental practices, there was actually a vote at Council this week to *widen* the Don Valley Parkway. I applaud Council's decision to reject that proposal. There was much optimistic discussion last year of

Toronto's waterfront. Since the announcement that Toronto would not be hosting the Olympics, that discussion has fallen off substantially and taken on a cynical tinge. Many people seem to feel that the grand scheme for redeveloping the waterfront is dead or dying. Perhaps it will soon be buried in the graveyard—rather crowded now—of failed waterfront initiatives. This would be a great shame. A redeveloped waterfront will be a vital component, if the economic engine of this province—Toronto—is not to stall.

I believe that there is much we could learn from other port cities, such as Vancouver, Boston and Savannah. So great is Boston's current undertaking to clean up and rejuvenate its harbour and restore its old town that it has been called the biggest construction site in American history. We must work relentlessly until we have remade Toronto into the waterfront city it should be. The harbour has been a focus of economic and leisure activity throughout Toronto's history, and it still contains a wealth of heritage sites. Think of the rich natural heritage of places like Ashbridge's Bay in East Toronto, once a wetland teeming with fish and fowl. The Fung Report did not, I believe, give adequate weight to the recognition of the hundreds of built and natural heritage sites between the Humber and Rouge Rivers.

We still have an opportunity to redress many past mistakes, recapture our waterfront, restore its natural beauty, knit it into the city and to the river valley parks systems, and significantly boost the quality of life for residents and the allure of Toronto for people everywhere. If—a very big 'if'—our crippling tolerances do not overcome us.

From my perch as the Chairman of the Ontario Heritage Foundation, do I see any hopeful signs of late that our four fatal tolerances are in retreat? Yes, I do. In the private sector, change is being driven by powerful preferences of taste and lifestyle. The cumulative effect of

individual decisions by many thousands of citizens is producing a shift in cultural attitudes that favours heritage. The best example of this is in our downtown residential neighbourhoods, where legions of homeowners have saved thousands of acres of our nineteenth-century cultural landscape. Heritage values are also gaining influence in the commercial real estate market. Imaginative developers are learning that historical architecture is valuable.

This is significant progress for the heritage field, which traditionally considered government intervention an absolute requirement to protect old structures from market forces. With the passage of the 'Kings' by-law in the mid-1990s there is an ongoing, systemic market interest working in favour of preservation of our history, through conversion and adaptive re-use of older buildings. It has been powerfully at work, in restoring and reviving the St. Lawrence Market area and the industrial warehouse area in the Western part of downtown. Here entertainment, design, gastronomy, art and architecture are all fusing together to create an explosive energy and an astonishing vibrancy. The recent purchase by Cityscape of the Gooderham and Worts site and its plans for a heritage precinct combining history, the arts and entertainment offer tremendously exciting possibilities. This project could stand out as one of the most dramatic instruments of urban regeneration.

From our perspective at the Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre, we are now also seeing a transformation in downtown Yonge Street. The private sector is demonstrating that it understands that heritage is the key to the future of the business of culture. But increased private sector support for heritage does not mean that governments can take a back seat in historic preservation. Far from it. Governments have power and authority that individuals and private, commercial interests lack, and it is the duty and responsibility of government

to use their unique prerogatives to do the things only they can do on behalf of all of us.

All of us need to send a strong message to the three levels of government that they must show more leadership. This is what the public wants. The recent Heritage Canada Foundation survey confirmed that the public strongly supports heritage preservation. This is one of those situations where public awareness is ahead of political awareness. I want to go strongly on record in calling for new provincial legislation which will even the playing field and place new controls on demolition. We need a better balance between the demolition squads and the preservationists. At a minimum, we need longer waiting periods before demolition permits are issued to allow concerned parties time to find solutions. I also am strongly of the view that a thorough legislative review of the adequacy of the *Ontario Heritage Act* should be undertaken now. Three decades have passed since the Act became law. Cities have changed, attitudes have changed, needs have changed. The time for a review is more than ripe. It is overdue. The provincial government should lead the way.

There are also problems with heritage conservation easements. Easements are excellent tools for protecting heritage sites. We see many fine examples across the province. I am concerned, however, that municipal easement agreements can be, and are being, changed at the whim of councils who choose inappropriate development over heritage preservation. I believe a power to provide a provincial override in matters of provincial heritage significance should be considered. Taxation is another conservation tool that lies exclusively within the government domain. In some circumstances, it can be the most powerful of all heritage tools. This week the Minister of Finance followed through on his May 2001 provincial budget promise by introducing legislation to encourage the restoration and preservation of heritage buildings.

I understand that it provides municipalities the ability to offer property tax relief to owners of heritage properties that are designated and protected by a conservation easement or other protective agreement. There is hope also that the federal government will move forward on the tax front.

Within a sympathetic tax environment market forces will work to save more buildings than could ever be rescued piecemeal by the public sector. Welcome as they are, these developments are only a beginning. As I have said, Toronto has much to learn from other Canadian and foreign cities. We are behind most of them. We need to find ways to ensure that inducements to heritage preservation will be an integral part of planning and development. But we cannot stop there. We need to borrow from others in creating innovative ways in which to promote heritage preservation. We need to build on the heritage tourism theme. Doors Open is a very good example. In past years, Doors Open events have attracted and enthralled enthusiastic crowds in Britain, Europe and recently in Toronto.

Indeed, as you know, over one weekend in May of this year, 73,000 visitors toured 91 heritage sites in Toronto, including four of the properties of the Ontario Heritage Foundation. I must recognize the innovative leadership role taken by the City of Toronto in bringing Doors Open here. Inspired by this success, the Ontario Heritage Foundation, with partners from across the province (including the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario), is launching a province-wide Doors Open initiative. 2002 will be our demonstration year, with 10 to 15 community clusters across the province participating. A Doors Open heritage tourism *season* will be launched, with communities holding vibrant events on different weekends from Spring to Fall. Doors Open Ontario will be a variety of local celebrations, promoted by Ontario's provincial tourism marketing infrastructure and by local communities. Marketing and

promotion will be achieved through Ontario's travel tourism guides, travel information centres, and a Doors Open web site. We are excited by the interest in this new initiative. Our cities, regions and communities can only benefit from the increased heritage tourism.

The potential I see for significant initiatives in the near future is critical to

the future of this city. Toronto must capitalize upon the promise currently evident if it is to secure its built and natural heritage and their irreplaceable contribution to defining its character. There are some important challenges ahead. How do we properly commemorate the site of our First Parliament? How do we deal with development in the area of Fort York? How do we protect the cemetery at St.

James' Cathedral? How do we avoid disfiguring our past? We face many serious issues that will shape our future. The way in which we address them will determine how we are judged by the next generations.

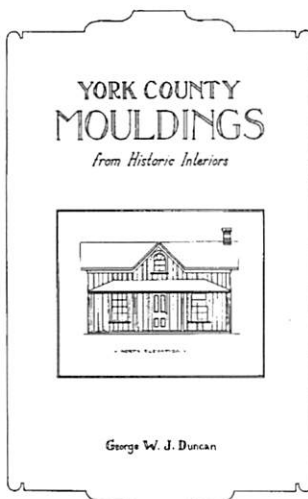
I look forward to continuing to work with the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario to preserve and protect Ontario's heritage.

A New Reference Book on Period Mouldings *York County Mouldings from Historic Interiors* Now available!

York County Mouldings is the culmination of over six years of research and documentation by ACO member George Duncan. This new reference book contains more than 350 full-size profiles of casings, baseboards, chair rails and other interior architectural mouldings from over 100 buildings, bound in a large, atlas-style format. Although the study area was rural York County, the profiles are representative of Ontario generally and will therefore be of interest well beyond the boundaries of the sample area. In addition to the rich variety of moulding profiles, *York County Mouldings* is a comprehensive reference work on the subject of interior trim that covers hand and machine production, moulding structure and installation, the woods used and the finishes applied. *York County Mouldings* is the ultimate resource on period trim in Ontario.

This new book will be of special interest to architects, architectural historians, LACACs, designers, woodworkers and those restoring heritage buildings. The actual-size

drawings show the mouldings in their full splendour. Be sure to order a copy for your architectural library, as this first edition will be limited to 1000 copies.



Individuals and organizations contributing to the costs of publication include:

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- York Chapter
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Vaughan Township
Historical Society

York County Mouldings From Historic Interiors is available for \$34.95 plus shipping and handling charges (\$5.00 book).

To order please forward your cheque or credit card information to:
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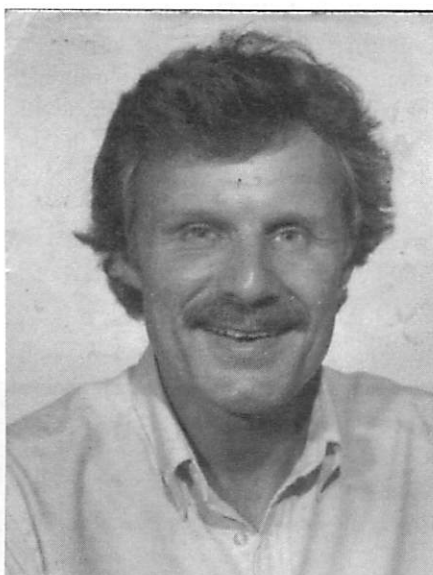
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In Memoriam

**Nicholas Hill, B. Arch., M.
Arch., OAA, MCIP**

Nick Hill passed away recently after a long, painful and heroic battle with cancer. He was an architect, landscape architect, planner and – above all – an artist. He was prominent and respected in the heritage conservation field and was known for the sensitivity and simple beauty of his work. He had a profound impact on all those with whom he dealt and changed the appreciation of the communities, homes and landscapes of countless people throughout Southwestern Ontario and other parts of Canada, including Saint John, New Brunswick where, for a time, he worked as Heritage Planner. The many things with which he was involved during his life included the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and he served as ACO President. He was my friend and, several years ago, my business partner.

I met Nick in 1969 while I was an undergraduate and he was in the Masters program at the University of Toronto School of Architecture. My immediate impression was of a rather eccentric Englishman prone to phrases such as “old boy” and “well done!” We collaborated on an elective course on City Lights and found ourselves renting an open-door light airplane to

photograph downtown Toronto from the air at two in the morning. I recall that the February cold led to more film containers being dumped from the plane than good photographs taken. I shortly became convinced of Nick’s inherent artistic madness when he stopped his Deux Cheveaux (a car which resembled a sardine can) in the middle of the Gardiner expressway to take pictures. This was no mean feat with the wind from frighteningly larger and heavier trucks and cars (such as Volkswagen Beetles) causing a rocking motion rarely seen this side of the Atlantic. Yet the images he captured were just right for the project.

I met him a few years later at the registration course for the Ontario Association of Architects, and we had several long conversations which led to our joining as partners in the little business he had set up in Goderich. In those early discussions he told me of the renovations to his stone farmhouse in the country, of its views of Windy Hill, of the Maitland River below and the landscape around which he, even then, had grown to love. I lived in that stone farmhouse over the first winter of our partnership in 1977 – Nick was renovating a log cabin in Bayfield at the time – and I drove regularly into Auburn to get groceries and supplies through some of the worst winter weather seen in those parts in years. Yet, in the spring the valley became idyllic, evoking images of English countryside that would have pleased even Constable. I could appreciate Nick’s love for the magic of that landscape. For Nick, this was an ideal countryside in which to practice architecture and, later, landscape architecture. His brilliance at capturing the essence of a place and elevating that essence to art was exemplary. His arts and crafts sensibility was ideally suited to both the rural and settled parts of Huron County and his legacy will live on in his books and illustrations of the streetscapes of the communities there.

After our partnership ended in 1983, Nick worked for a time in London, Ontario and then Saint John, New

Brunswick. His influence in both communities was subtle yet extensive. Yet his love of landscape eventually drew him back to Guelph where he completed a Master’s program in landscape architecture. He then combined these skills in his work with heritage sites and districts.

Within every artistic soul there lie demons. Every true artist desires to bend the world to their view of how things should be and Nick was no exception. Inanimate things co-operated with him and succumbed to his great energy and determination. While he transformed landscapes and buildings, he sometimes made the lives of those close to him difficult when his view of how things should be (always with the best of motives) conflicted with their own. In those situations, the failure was sometimes unbearable to him and caused him great pain. However, his life was not without humour. Of things which come to mind are the plastered rubber boot which hung from the ceiling of the living room in his stone house after his misstep during renovations. On one occasion, while in telephone conversation with me at the office, a friend inquired as to what the commotion was in the background. I allowed as how it was Nick running up and down the stairs with boxes of books packing his car. Why, I was asked? To start a sheep farm in New Zealand, I replied. Seriously, I was asked? Very, I replied. What will you do, I was asked? Talk to him, I said – he’ll be fine tomorrow – and wait for the next incident in roughly three months. Years later we both were able to laugh at these and many more incidents.

At the root of these problems was a desire to love – and to be loved unreservedly regardless of personal foibles. I recall an image just before I left their small home in Guelph and last saw Nick alive. Nick was sitting in his wheelchair and his wife Margaret, behind, was holding his hand. They presented a tableau to me of what could have been a painting expressing the



Nick Hill with Alex & Liam McGarry, November 2000.
photo: Fred McGarry



Pelee Island Lighthouse, 1833. Restored 2000 by Nick Hill.
photo: Dan Schneider

embodiment of the deepest love. In his great pain and suffering over the past couple of years of his illness, Nick had found what he had always sought. I was saddened by his impending fate yet delighted that he had reached this personal peace. And delighted too that up to the end he continued to paint small watercolours of his surroundings – one of his last works was a series of views of birds visiting the birdbath and of the garden around.

Nick and Margaret had planned his departure thoroughly and we talked of his burial place in Ball's cemetery just across the road from his old stone farmhouse. He had designed modest renovations to the 1880s chapel there and provided a bequest for maintenance of the site. He and Margaret were making plans for their cabin property on the Maitland River near Auburn to be protected as a nature preserve.

Artwork was being sent to various museums for the enjoyment of others. We talked of his soon-to-come freedom from pain. Of the chance for his spirit to wander Windy Hill free of the confines of a wheelchair. Of the paths along the Maitland River from his small cabin through to Auburn. Rambling in company with the ghosts of his beagles Sheila and Jiggs and their friend King. In company, of course, with the other spirits of nature with which he communed over the years of his life there.

Nick died on Tuesday, August 21. I did not hear from Margaret right away as she was unsure of my whereabouts. I had been travelling extensively across eastern Canada and was in the process of setting up a new partnership in Toronto. It is ironic that I am writing this in Goderich as I have not been here

for many months. I had decided to drive here with my daughter to see an old friend for the weekend and had hoped to visit Nick on the way back through Guelph so she could meet him before his passing. When Margaret realized she had my cell phone number, she put through a call on Friday. After all my travels and movements, including several years in Ottawa, and the distance I had put between myself and the Maitland Valley, the phone rang just before 9 o'clock (my daughter will vouch for this!) *while the car was crossing the Maitland Bridge in Auburn* on the way to Goderich. It was Margaret calling to tell me she had sad news. It was also Nick, of course, calling to say he's fine and content and wandering the Maitland Valley and the hills around.

Christopher Borgal

Branch Reports

PORT HOPE

Through the never-ending energy and dedication of our Branch members, 2001 has been another successful year for Port Hope ACO activities.

The biannual Garden Tour on July 7, organized by Heather MacKinnon and her committee, was a resounding success despite competition from many other garden tours in this part of the province. Exceptionally fine weather graced the annual House Tour on September 29. A new feature of the tour this year was a series of lectures at the Capitol Theatre on collecting antiques, architecture and restoration. This year's House Tour was a sell-out and beautifully executed, thanks to Betty-Ann Knutson and her committee. Due to the hard work of our volunteers and the generosity of the home and garden owners, these two events raised over \$36,000 to be used for Branch projects.

The ACO Port Hope has committed \$50,000 over three years to support the restoration and expansion of the Port Hope Public Library. Currently the executive is considering a major contribution to heritage aspects of the Capitol Theatre development (phase 2). We continue to make contributions to projects such as the Wesleyville Cultural Landscape feasibility study, the VIA station and individual restoration projects through our Heritage Fund.

The Branch held a barbeque at the lakefront home of Peter and Jane Rungay in June and is planning our Christmas get-together at Penstowe, the home of Betty-Ann and Larry Knutson on November 29, 2001. Our members enjoyed an evening with Daphne Svenningson in the Greek Islands and



House on Lakeshore Road near Port Hope.
photo: Daphne Svenningson



Port Hope garden, one of eight in this year's garden tour.
photo: Daphne Svenningson

Crete on October 18. All these fellowship events give our members the opportunity to enjoy discussions of architecture, our advocacy role in the community and, of course, each other's company.

A new member, Suzanne Camm, has created a series of architectural medallions featuring Port Hope buildings, and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to the ACO.

In late spring 2002, the Branch will repeat "Open Doors Port Hope and Hope." We are planning to work with the Cobourg ACO Branch and the Ontario Heritage Foundation to promote this event across Ontario.

Three home-owners have taken advantage of a new program of consultation on restoration offered by Peter and Jane Rungay. Peter is also collecting family photos of the exterior of buildings in the Port Hope area to assist in restoration research.

As a follow-up to Street Smarts, we advocated a municipal committee on incentives for heritage restoration;

however, due to lack of representation from some invited groups the committee has not yet met. The Branch executive is developing a position on preserving the Lakeshore Road cultural landscape in the face of major west-end development plans.

We're very fortunate in Port Hope to have a strong and concerned LACAC, which is dedicated to maintaining our architectural heritage. Their work is not always pleasant, as recent controversy over signs in the Walton Street Heritage Conservation District has revealed. Both the members of LACAC and the ACO are to be commended on their strong positions on behalf of our heritage.

Sue Stickley

COBOURG

The Cobourg branch of the ACO was founded with the idea of saving Whitehall, the oldest, finest and most historic of Cobourg houses. Sadly, the Whitehall watch may be turning into a deathwatch. ACO has received notice that the owners of Whitehall have picked up the demolition permit that was approved a year ago and appear closer to demolition. They are unavailable for comment. Our president, Peter Smith, has asked for a promise of timely notice, but so far there is no indication that we will get this.

ACO continues to be stymied by the extremely high asking price for the property (over \$500,000) and the uncertainty relating to the plans of a succession of potential buyers who have come forward only to fall back. Some would make us a gift of the house in order to clear the land for commercial building. Others encourage the hope that they might leave the house where it is and find their own use for it. Loblaws has not absolutely refused to consider engaging with Whitehall if they should happen to go ahead with building a store on adjacent



The home of eagle.ca. 26 Chapel Street, Cobourg
photo: Tom Copeland

land; but this seems to be contingent upon Walmart also going ahead.

Better news of the old house at 26 Chapel Street, the home of eagle.ca, an internet provider. Two members of the board of Cobourg branch toured this building hoping that eagle.ca was typical of certain new high tech businesses that are finding it possible to operate out of old buildings, avoiding demolition and mutilation. We found what we hoped for and a good deal more. Tom Copeland, the owner of the business and the house, is an accomplished conservationist who seems to have had all the right intentions for this Victorian manse turned medical clinic turned internet offices and powerhouse. A room (once the kitchen) packed with flickering modems generates enough heat to raise a practical question whether it might not be used to heat the house. Outside that door, however, the rooms and hallways have been smoothly restored with a nice attention to detail and care to retain the feeling that the building is a fine old house. Earlier tenants had been a group of doctors who had cut up several of the larger rooms into small examination rooms. Fortunately, trim had been left and the original room shapes were easy to make out. They are now restored to their original dimensions and in use as comfortable offices. There is of course no attempt to conceal the fact that former parlours and bedrooms have had their functions

changed, and computers are everywhere. But the point stands out that this very modern business fits very well into this old house, and that the house has benefited from this newest turn in its history. Whitehall needs such a break.

A hopeful development downtown is the renovation of a decayed Victorian commercial building being undertaken by local businessman Bill Patchett. The project is now pretty well complete; retail and restaurant spaces are available and condominium apartments are for sale. This is a worthy experiment in downtown renewal and deserves to succeed and be imitated by other owners of similar properties.

Finally, downtown Cobourg's historic district may soon be decorated with as many as eight murals on historic themes. Reaction ranges from dismay (on the part of those who feel that this is not what "real" heritage places do) to "very nice."

Bill Halewood

HERITAGE CAMBRIDGE

Anniversary tours

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of Heritage Cambridge was the focus



Dobbie House, Cambridge
photo: Laurie Thatcher

of our organization in June. Our board wanted to do something special for our members, not as a fundraiser, but rather a thank you for their support. Arrangements were made for two very special tours occurring on two separate weekends in June.

The first tour was the historic Dobbie Mansion, one of the earliest houses built in West Galt. The house and adjacent property are slated for restoration and development sympathetic to the original stone design from 1857. This was a win-win for both the Dobbie family and our organization. They wanted to promote their development; we wanted to give our members a chance to see a house frozen in time. Nothing has been touched since 1925 just before the Depression hit. And even then, the only changes were wallpaper. The kitchen contains the commercial appliances from 1925, still in use today. Over 500 people came through and a press conference was held to make some special announcements.

The first of these was the receipt of a \$30,000 endowment grant for the Sheave Tower. Heritage Cambridge made an application under the provincial Heritage Challenge Fund only 36 hours before the fund was closed down! Much to our delight and surprise, we were awarded all of the money we requested, and our local MPP, Gerry Martinuik, was on hand to symbolically hand us the cheque. The



House in Ayr
photo: Laurie Thatcher

fund has been named the Nicholas Hill Memorial Endowment Fund, in honour of our architect for Sheave Tower, Heritage Cambridge member and friend.

The second announcement was something Heritage Cambridge had been working on since last January, again in honour of our anniversary. We wanted to give back to the community something symbolic of the 30 years of work.

The McDougal Cottage was one of the first projects Heritage Cambridge got involved in many years ago. It was a stone cottage that had interior murals, hand painted by one Jack Baird. Mr. Baird was a Canadian naval seaman at the turn of the century, who fell on hard times in Nova Scotia. His brother in Galt brought Jack to live with him and, in return for this kindness, Jack painted murals in their home. The murals depicted various ports from around the world as Jack saw them in the late 1800s – the Nova Scotia coastline, the Philippines and Greece, just to name a few.

Heritage Cambridge bought McDougal Cottage and later sold it with easements and covenants and contributed funding for its restoration. Tim Drenan bought and restored this house to its original splendour. It was sold in 1991 to a family and recently put on the market again. A problem was that the area had changed in that time to one of heavy commercial use with factory outlets and manufacturing. The family could not sell it as a home and had it re-zoned for

commercial use. Heritage Cambridge then got a call from the real estate agent who was concerned for its future. Hairdressers and other businesses that use chemicals were looking at McDougal, and because the murals are on linen, such a use would put them in jeopardy.

Heritage Cambridge made a proposal to municipal and regional councils to partner with us and purchase McDougal to be operated as Cambridge's first historic or interpretive site. Many presentations and a lot of negotiations yielded the result we were looking for. On June 16, Regional Chair Ken Seiling and Cambridge Mayor Doug Craig announced the building would be bought and put under the wing of Doon Heritage and Josef Schneider Haus, two historic sites now operated by the Region of Waterloo. Cambridge will finally have its first historic site!

The other special anniversary tour was an historic house tour of Ayr. This community is in North Dumfries Township and we had never had a real tour of this area. Knocking on doors found local residents excited and willing to participate. The day coincided with the Fresh Ayr Festival, and the day was glorious. All of the homes were within walking distance and, in between the tours of the homes, hundreds of people gathered on corners to talk to old friends and members of Heritage Cambridge.

Cider and Spirit Walk

Heritage Cambridge just wrapped up our second fundraiser of the year. "The Cider and Spirit Walk" saw over 1600 people participate in an event that focuses on local history in a unique and entertaining way. Partnering with Galt Little Theatre, a volunteer community-performing group, the Cider and Spirit Walk raised over \$12,000 in the course of two nights.

This year's event re-enacted the cholera epidemic of 1834, where one in five residents of this area were wiped out. Records indicated the warning that

cholera was present in a touring circus were ignored by the founders of the community in order to recoup their investment in the circus performing in Galt.

Other vignettes included the biography of William Tassie, founder of Galt Collegiate. At one time Galt Collegiate was second to Upper Canada College in scholastic achievements in Ontario. The 1920s' World Heavyweight boxing champion Tommy Burns was the big hit of the night as he picked on ticket holders who disagreed with him. CKCO Television (CTV Network) brought their weather reporter down to broadcast live from Spirit Walk. This increased our awareness and a sell out occurred on Saturday night. The reporter (Dave McDonald) came back the next night with his family to enjoy Spirit Walk. A group of Japanese tourists showed up with cameras in hand to photograph the actors in period costume. Attendees praised the fact that this is an event that any age can enjoy. "I stood next to an eight year old, a 20 year old couple in love, and a grandmother of 85," said one visitor. "Nowhere today do you find this kind of broad interest in an event."

Heritage Cambridge will appeal golf course to OMB

Politically, the Heritage Cambridge Board voted unanimously to take the Region of Waterloo to the OMB. Cambridge Municipal Council turned down a re-zoning application by the City of Kitchener for land Kitchener owns in Cambridge. The City of Kitchener wants to expand their golf course into Cambridge. This would have required an Official Plan amendment and declassification of ESPA lands. The land has an ESPA zoning on it, it is in the Blair Heritage District, it is within 300 meters of the Grand River, a designated Canadian Heritage River, and it is in an area classified as high risk for bald eagle wintering habitat by the Ministry of Natural Resources. The bald eagle is

classified as an endangered species. The Region of Waterloo's council were presented with an Official Plan application to have the land re-zoned, after Cambridge turned it down, and Regional Council approved it anyway. Members of Regional Council are made up of representatives from the City of Kitchener. Heritage issues were not addressed as well as many other issues. This action has a potential impact on other communities throughout Ontario, and our board felt a decision from the OMB was vital. Cross your fingers for us.

Laurie Thatcher

LONDON REGION

Talbot Inn Down

Since the last issue of ACORN, the Talbot Inn – the last vestige of downtown's historic Talbot Streetscape which came under a wrecker's ball in 1991 – has finally come down. Down with a whimper in a matter of hours, and with very little fanfare from the media. The hush-hush was surprising considering the much touted media spectacle of the planned "imploding" demolition of the CN station tower earlier in February. This spectacle, to make way for parking for the new Via station, was complete with vantage viewpoints identified weeks ahead of time. No, the majestic inn came down quietly and, in fact, although the building facade was deemed structurally unstable, it somehow managed to stay up long after its interior support walls had vanished. All this occurred ironically enough on June 3, the morning of our annual Geranium Walk. We had less than 48 hours notice of the demolition.

The façade of the Inn is to be built into the new arena currently under construction on the site. But since very few of the original face bricks survived the claws of the backhoes during demolition, new "old" brick will be used instead! Some of the original

windows, keystones and other decorative woodwork will be re-used, but generally most of the materials will be new, including tinted glazing to mask the floor of the arena which bisects the second floor windows.

Geranium Walk

Despite the demise of the Talbot Inn, we had another successful Geranium Walk, walk number 28. We chose the Windsor Avenue - Baker Street area in old South, which is an area dominated by Period Revival and Arts and Crafts houses of the 1920s and 1930s. We were able to have open not only five exciting houses, but two fabulous apartment buildings, complete with back (service) entrances and staircases to each suite, lots of natural light and plenty of character! We had a good turnout, despite the cooler climate.

Cultural Tourism at the Start Line – Quick Update

The Heritage and Museum Coordinating Committee and the City is about to hire a Coordinator to oversee the many heritage museums and organizations as we look to develop London into a heritage destination. We are rolling on a marketing plan, and interested organizations from within the sector are applying for funding.

Branch Changes

Unfortunately, this will be my last branch report as I have stepped down as branch president. In a revealing review of past minutes, I realized I had been at the helm for four years! In addition to my work, I am taking a couple of conservation courses through the University of Victoria Cultural Resource Management Programme, so my evenings are swamped to say the least. We have some new faces this year on the executive, including our Geranium Walk Coordinator this year, Shirley Gladwell; our treasurer Kelley McKeating; and our interim-president Don Menard. I know they will, with our current executive, be an inspiration

for our branch activities and proudly represent the Branch.

Alison Brown

QUINTE BRANCH

It was with some reluctance that I agreed to stand for the job of president in January as I was following in the footsteps of long-time president Dan Atkinson whose years of service and knowledge on the subject of architecture far outweighed my own. I am glad to report that with Dan's help and the support of my executive committee I have come through the year without problems. I now realize that until you have held the position of president, you really don't know all that it entails! Many thanks to Dan for a job very well done.

I am pleased to report that the Quinte Branch has had a very good year so far, with our current membership standing at 95 members by mid-July. This is an increase over last year's figure which was 78. Requests for membership are still coming in so hopefully we will be over the one hundred mark by the time you read this.

Since 1983 when the Quinte branch was established, our branch has offered monthly walking tours/talks to the public and to our members, and I am happy to report that this year has been no exception. In January our members met at the Sir James Whitney School in Belleville to hear Doug Crawford talk on canning in Prince Edward County. Doug gave us a wonderful lecture and brought with him examples from the different canning factories that once operated in the county. It was therefore with very deep regret that we learned about two months later that Doug had died quite suddenly; his passing will certainly leave a void among those who took an active role in preserving the county's history.

In February our members heard Ron

Brown speak about the need to preserve Ontario's historic buildings. Ron brought with him a selection of fascinating slides from his collection. This is the second year that our branch has been lucky enough to have Ron speak to us. This talk was followed in March by another slide show by Tom Cruikshank and John De Visser. Both speakers were warmly received by our members, especially Tom, who was an active member of our branch for some time.

In April I led our members on a tour of the Royal Military College in Kingston that also included a private tour of Old Fort Henry. We were lucky to have beautiful weather, and I'm sure our members were glad to get out walking after such a long hard winter. It was troubling to hear that a national heritage site like Fort Henry was suffering from serious deterioration due to lack of funding by the provincial and federal governments. It only goes to show that our organization is still very much needed if our heritage and culture is to be safeguarded.

In May our branch offered a bus tour to Peterborough where we toured a section of the historic residential area of the downtown. Thanks goes to Mary Jones, our branch's secretary, who arranged this tour for us.

In June, our members took another bus tour across the border to visit Clayton, Cape Vincent, and Sackets Harbour. In my opinion, this was the highlight of our touring year, as the weather was wonderful and the places superb. Our local guide at Sackets Harbour was even very tactful when talking about the real winner of the War of 1812. Dan, who organized this tour for us, spotted other places of interest, so I'm sure we'll be back touring that area.

In July, Bob Hintz, who has led many

walks for our branch before, gave members a tour of Deseronto. This once thriving community now leads a rather quiet existence as most of the major road traffic by-passes it. The main clue to its important past is its opera house which stands empty at the east end of town.

In August, Bob Cardwell, the local historian led members on a tour of historic Barriefield, which was established to house the people working at the Kingston ship yards (formerly the grounds of RMC), and then the officers' families from Fort Henry. Although we hadn't planned our walking tour around the War of 1812, our tours of RMC/Fort Henry, Sackets Harbour and Barriefield were all connected to this event.

In September our branch joined with the Belleville Cemetery Board to celebrate the life of Susanna Moodie and the dedication of the replica "angel" tombstone which marks the family's burial site. This was a very special occasion with about one hundred people attending, most of whom, joined in a walking tour of the cemetery following the unveiling ceremony.

In October Tony and Marjory Darling led members on a tour of Lakeport, established in 1793 when Joseph Keeler and his family of United Empire Loyalists arrived from the United States. The touring year ended in November with the viewing of several tapes on the architecture of Chicago and its effect on the development of the downtowns of many cities.

Our branch continues to be involved in other areas as well, such as monitoring the revival of Belleville's downtown, developing the HASP study into CD ROMs, keeping advised of changes to properties in Prince Edward County,

and on-going support of the Wilton Women's Institute. Our branch now has an on-line email service which can be found at acoquinte@yahoogroups.com. I invite anyone who is interested in our branch's activities to check out this site.

David Bentley

TORONTO (TRAC)

Trip to Boston

We had a trip to Boston from August 4-7. A small party of ten set out (and we all came back too), travelling by air. We stayed at the YMCA, which has a good central location and provides a bit of interest on its own account – the building is Edwardian, and has been proven itself very adaptable. We saw the main art galleries, Harvard University, the Arboretum, the Atheneum library; had a boat trip; and walked around Back Bay and the Beacon Hill areas. The Atheneum library, a four storey building of 1850 in superb classical style, was stunning. It is at present undergoing renovation, and we had a personal tour. To be sure we had a crowded schedule, but it was an enjoyable opportunity to see and do new things.

The old asylum

There are plans to redevelop the site of the old Provincial Asylum, in what the proponents call an "intensification" of the site. All sorts of commerce will be introduced, a bus route and roads – all to make the site indistinguishable from the rest of the city. Since at least 1975, the Architectural Conservancy has had a profile of being actively engaged with the asylum and its issues; interestingly, most of the architectural firms who have submitted proposals for the redevelopment of the site have bought copies of our book. We try to impress upon people the value of retaining some of the nineteenth century character of the site. There is concern in the neighbourhood at plans to demolish more of the old wall; also, much green

****ACORN Deadline****

Spring Issue (includes branch reports) - March 1, 2002
Contributors - please mark your calendars now!

space will be lost. While the nineteenth century alienists may have been misguided in some things, they were I think not entirely mistaken in looking to nature for some curative power.

Design Exchange

The Design Exchange, housed in the old Stock Exchange, has had its proposal to cut a window in the facade fully supported by planning permissions. The proposal is promoted by one of the largest and (considered by many) one of the most progressive architectural firms in the city, Blumberg Payne Mackenna and Kuwabara. Kuwabara made an appearance at city council when the topic came up, and admitted under questioning that he has some difficulty appreciating the Art Deco Style, and that the Design Exchange would do better in another building. He had lots to say about what the window would do to bring more attention to the Design Exchange.

In the minds of city councilors the cutting of a window may seem like a trivial alteration to the facade. And it is trivial compared to the tower that rises above it since 1993. However, the tower facade is recessive in view, being dark, while a new window is a deformity of the original face. There is also the bigger question of the viability of the Design Exchange itself, which despite much talk of Canada-wide influence, derives most of its funding from a city grant (derived from the taxes paid on the tower above, that the poor building has to wear like a hat). This just adds to the mixture of motives for the endorsement of an outrageous solecism by councillors. We are fortunate only in that this indignity has stimulated the formation of an Art Deco Society branch in Toronto.

There is a wicked spirit abroad that preys on the mind of architects, whispering to them that Toronto really has no architecture worth worrying about. We can remind ourselves that the leaning tower of Pisa survives because the owner and citizens tolerated its dysfunctional lean, which appeared

when the building was new. We challenge the demon of destruction whenever we can, but scared away from one target, it reappears at another. It is a fact that much money can still be made on Toronto real estate and owners often see this best accomplished by drastic change. Demolition, re-development, radical renovation, they are all agents in this process.

Fort York

The site of Fort York is threatened, again by an overpoweringly large building in the neighbourhood. An OMB hearing for an Official Plan amendment is taking place in November. The site is owned by the city and has had a struggle for survival going back more than a hundred years.

Eaton's College Street

The old Eaton's building at College and Yonge, an Art Deco masterpiece, is to have its ground floor shops re-designed. This is in the hands of ERA Architects, who openly say they have not yet defined the future tenants. The famous seventh floor, with its auditorium and Round Room restaurant, has been closed for twenty years since Eaton's sold the building, and is in a poor state. Happily it will be at least partly



refurbished, although a new use has not been found. The problem is that the function for which the space was built has atrophied, and the current owner, Great West Life, is not in the same business. The enthusiasm and will to make a commercially viable property must come essentially from tenants.

South Rosedale

This has echoes in South Rosedale, where there has long been an interest in defining the historic character of the neighbourhood. A TRAC walk of one street, Chestnut Park, was led by Alec Keefer on October 15. Even though it was raining intermittently, fifteen hardy souls turned out, and stayed with it. Some residents of Rosedale are moving toward defining a Heritage Conservation District. What will best protect the character of the neighbourhood, and at the same time the investment of the owners? How to safeguard the peacefully secure and happy ambience? The questions are many, the answers difficult indeed.

Edna Hudson

NORTH WATERLOO REGION

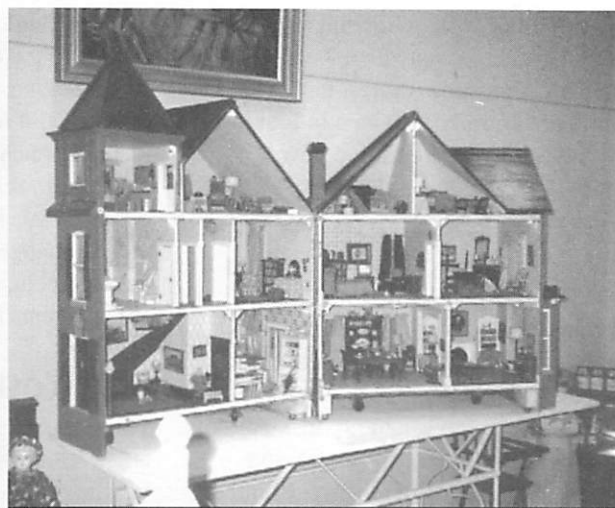
AGM

Our Annual General Meeting for the Branch took place June 14th at the Brubacher House on the North Campus of the University of Waterloo. About 25 people attended and enjoyed a warm summer evening touring the outside of this historic stone building that is built in the style of a typical Pennsylvania German farm house. The ground floor is restored to the 1850s with furniture and items appropriate to a home of this kind. Our hosts Mr. and Mrs. Wiebe live on the second floor and gave us a guided tour. Our meeting took place in the basement room complete with a large stone fireplace and exposed stone walls and brick floors.

Our speaker was a well known member of the local arts scene, Martin DeGroot,



Stone house, Dundas
photo: Brian Dietrich



Dollhouse, Dundas Historical Society Museum
photo: Brian Dietrich

who spoke on arts in the community and how important it was to try to link like minded organizations together. He pointed out the value of architecture as an art form on the landscape and made us look at architecture in a different light.

The usual business of an Annual Meeting was conducted and we were very pleased to have Nina Chapple as a guest. Nina was representing the ACO Ontario Council and brought greetings from them. She thanked the North Waterloo branch for a well run Provincial Conference and Annual Meeting. Each member of the executive received a copy of *Rogues' Hollow*, the story of the village of Newburgh, Ontario, written by Peter John Stokes, Tom Cruickshank and Robert Heaslip. We were very happy to accept this fine book. The evening ended with refreshments provided by our members.

Dundas driving-walking tour

On October 14, thirteen of us, including most of the executive, took a scenic drive to Dundas down old number 8 highway by way of the village of Blair. We pointed out almost every historic house along the way. The route was laid out so that it passed by many lovely vistas especially in the area of the Niagara Escarpment.

The purpose of the tour was to see the

Dundas Historical Society Museum and take a combination driving and walking tour of the Historic District in Dundas. The museum was a little treasure with display cases of silver, dishes, and glassware. Part of one room was set up to reflect an elaborate Victorian parlour and another held a wonderful doll collection.

Following the museum visit we drove to Taylor's Tea Room on King Street and enjoyed a selection of fancy sandwiches and little cakes. This was a welcome interlude before the next phase of our tour.

The original town plot was surveyed in 1810, under the name of Coote's Paradise; this was changed to Dundas in 1814. The town became a shipping centre in 1837, but was largely bypassed by the railways after 1853. The surviving older buildings suggest two periods of prosperity, the 1840s and the 1890s.

Our tour took us past the 1848 Classical Revival Town Hall, Knox Presbyterian Church begun in 1847 with later additions, and the architecturally pleasing Central School. Houses of note included one believed to have been built in 1816, a Regency Cottage built in 1846 and a large stone Classical Revival cottage from the same year. The walking tour portion of our trip was all the better because it stopped raining long enough for us to enjoy

viewing some of these grand houses without the use of umbrellas that we all carried along on that gloomy day.

We hope to do another tour of Dundas and area in the future. Perhaps then we will concentrate more on the many walking trails and areas of natural beauty such as Webster's Falls and other spots along the escarpment.

Marg Rowell

WINDSOR REGION

Since our last report, there have been three main issues/projects in our branch:

Third Annual Photo Contest

This was our most successful to date. We had originally decided that the subject would be windows, but with the current issue regarding the proposed demolition of the French-Canadian Roman Catholic churches in Pointe aux Roches and St. Joachim, it was quickly decided to change the subject. This proved to be a popular decision as there were 78 entries from 36 individuals – the most yet. The two categories were Colour and Black & White and entries were limited to *amateur photographers only*. The judges, architects John Hreno and Greg McLean and photographers Don Trussler and Spike Bell, had some

very tough decisions to make. We were very pleased that we had so many entries from "The County."

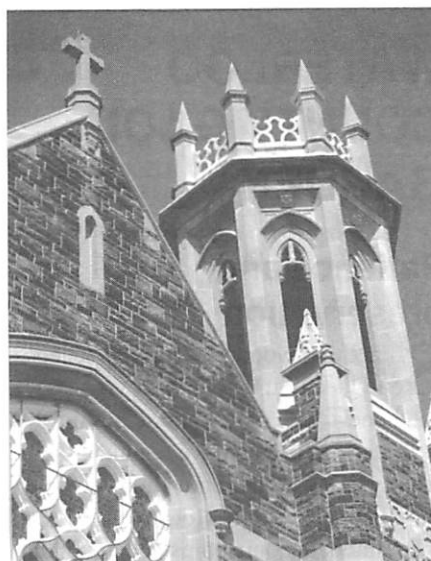
The winning entries for 2001 were: Colour – First, Shirley Brigden (Holy Name of Mary Roman Catholic Church, Windsor), Second, Monica Purdon (Holy Name of Mary Roman Catholic Church, Windsor), and Third, Deborah Boersma (Assumption Roman Catholic Church, Windsor); Black & White – First, Sandi Wheaton (Assumption Roman Catholic Church, Windsor), Second, Ian J. Douglas (Eglise St. Joachim, St. Joachim), and Third, Ian J. Douglas (Eglise L'Annonciation, Pointe aux Roches). Several Honourable Mentions were also awarded in each category.

This year, for the first time, we held an Awards Reception at the Windsor & Region Arts Council Gallery on July 17. All the photographs entered in the contest were on display at the Gallery for that week. The reception was attended by 75 people and the entrants were thrilled to see their work displayed.

Windsor Region Branch gratefully thanks our generous sponsors: Harris Marketing Communications, Preney Print & Litho Inc., MacLaren's Photo Lab, Bergeron Art & Frame & Il Gabbiano Ristorante, The Windsor Star and Black's Photography. Our thanks also to Board member Cheryl Worr and volunteer Rina Guarascio for their enthusiasm and hard work, which resulted in our most successful photo contest to date.

Dominion Bank Building

The Dominion Bank Re-Use Committee (on which are several ACO-Windsor Region members) has been very diligent in their responsibilities and spent many hours developing criteria for the re-use of "the stones," which was ultimately approved by Windsor City Council. As reported previously, a Request for Proposals was issued last fall, with a closing date of



Shirley Brigden's photo of Holy Name of Mary Church, Windsor



Deborah Boersma's photo of Assumption Church, Windsor



Windsor ACO Photo Contest winner Ian Douglas is congratulated by Cheryl Worr as Pat Malicki and others look on.
photo: Rina Guarascio

April 20, 2001. The RFP was advertised in various publications – Ontario Heritage Foundation, ACORN, HALP, Heritage Canada, trade magazines, etc. – but only one proposal was received. The committee, using a previously agreed upon scoring system (also approved by City Council) has deemed that the proposal was not acceptable. On September 10, Windsor City Council accepted the committee's recommendation and directed the committee continue to seek proposals and submit a progress report by December 31, 2001.

Essex Churches

Last March, the proposed demolition of L'Eglise de L'Annonciation (1905) in Pointe aux Roches and L'Eglise St. Joachim (1891) in St. Joachim hit the press and the Save Our Sanctuaries Committee (S.O.S.) was formed. The proposal has been that the existing churches (three in all) be demolished and a new one built. The Windsor Region Branch of the ACO has been quietly involved in this issue since then.

Ironically, this year marked the 300th anniversary of French settlement of the Windsor-Essex County-Detroit area. Celebrations have been going on all year, culminating with a festival this past summer, parts of which were simulcast on both sides of the Detroit River. It was a sight to behold.

The S.O.S. committee is deeply committed to preserving these churches. They are literally the centre of their communities; they are landmarks (L'Eglise St. Joachim can be seen from Hwy. 401 and L'Eglise de L'Annonciation has been a beacon for boaters/sailors for decades); and to destroy them would rip the heart out of their communities. Many parishioners have committed to restoring the churches, but will not contribute towards the building of a new church. Public meetings on this issue have attracted well over 200 people each time.

At our meeting on September 5, the

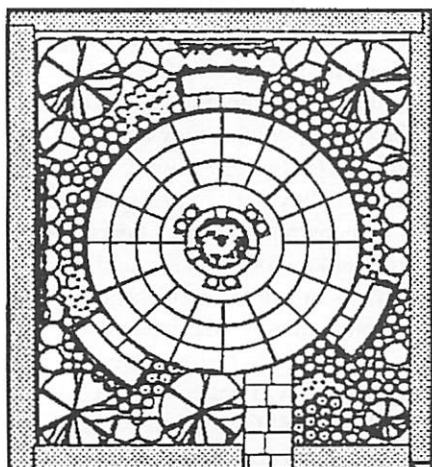
Windsor Region Branch unanimously decided to accept donations on behalf of S.O.S. (their chair, David Tremblay, was elected to our Board at our Annual General Meeting in April). The S.O.S. committee is prepared to go as far as they have to. The issue has been broadcast on both the English and French CBC networks; they have received calls from Vancouver, Ottawa and various communities in Quebec. Legal services have been offered and a recommendation received that the group communicate with an organization in Rome which fights to save important churches. There is no doubt that these churches are an important part of the history of the development of Essex County.

In other news, Pat Bowsher, one of our Board members, continues to represent the ACO on the Windsor LACAC (WACAC). She continues to "speak our mind" – and her own.

An observation: we continue to work toward a common goal; as branches we contribute to that common goal; together we will achieve the common goal – the preservation of the best examples of our built and natural heritage.

Pat Malicki

* * * * *



Design for The Walled Garden, The Waterloo County Gaol Garden courtesy Wendy Shearer Landscape Architect Limited

WATERLOO COUNTY GAOL GARDEN

Patience and preservation

Something wonderful has happened on Queen Street North in Kitchener! The oldest public buildings in Waterloo Region have regained their dignity at last. The renovations at the Gaol and Governor's House to accommodate courtrooms and a judicial administration centre are almost completed, and the exteriors of both buildings have been restored. For the first time since 1878, the entire front wall and original entrance of the Waterloo County Gaol are exposed to view. The fourteen-foot high, granite walls around the yard have been repaired and repointed. After 15 years of persistent lobbying, the Friends of the Governor's House and Gaol are delighted that the Regional Municipality of Waterloo committed to preserving this historic site.

The vision

In February 2000, over 50 citizens participated in a visioning exercise, contributing ideas for a concept of a public garden within the walls of the first exercise yard. People agreed that the garden should be a quiet place for reflection, colourful in all seasons, and symbolic of the early history of the County. The theme would be a Victorian garden in a vernacular style appropriate to a county town of German and English-speaking residents. Wendy Shearer of Wendy Shearer Landscape Architect Limited won the contract for the innovative design of a garden that includes heritage elements and provides an oasis in a busy city. The stone walls create a microclimate for a heritage garden of shrubs, vines, roses and perennials that would have grown in Berlin around 1900. The garden is the first demonstration model in the Region of Waterloo to use a choice of plants

that characterize the Victorian era, create visual interest in winter, and require less water and care in summer. The educational and aesthetic value of this garden complements its purposes for relaxation and recreation.

ACO's visit to the Walled Garden

For over two years, Co-chairs Jean Haalboom and Patricia Wagner, and the Executive Committee of the Friends have worked hard to create a heritage garden. When ACO visited the construction site on the chilly, rainy day of the Conference in April, 2001, we held umbrellas and watched our footing on slippery, muddy boardwalks. In the exercise yard, we noticed gray, parged walls and topsoil in place around the perimeter. The fact that no plants were in sight challenged the imagination of even the optimists! However, progress resumed in drier weather.

The Walled Garden takes shape

Through the spring and summer, work inside the Walled Garden focused on installations for a water feature and irrigation, and power for night illumination. To restore the exterior of the stone walls dating from 1861, the black, gray and rose-colored granite stones were repointed with mortar mixed by hand. These colours inspired the choice of mahogany and black granite for the fountain ring in the centre, and rose granite pavers for the surrounding walkway. Wrought iron garden accents and benches will enhance the colorful shrubs, vines, roses, and perennials. The design of the entrance gate, for example, features a flower in bloom and over it, the motif of a keystone. (Keystones are prominently centred above the windows of the Gaol and Governor's house.) At the wall opposite the entrance, a wrought iron trellis will resemble branches to support flowering vines or climbing roses. The Walled Garden will truly be the jewel of the garden project!

Expansion of the garden and fundraising

The Walled Garden was conceived as a millennium project some months before the Region of Waterloo decided to restore the buildings. The Friends' initial plan was to confine the garden to a walled exercise yard, with some plant material outside the walls. In October 1999, the City of Kitchener endorsed the garden project as one of Kitchener's official millennium projects. A grant of \$30,000, accessed through the city from the province's Main Street Ontario millennium program, provided a solid foundation for the \$85,000 community fundraising campaign. The Friends launched the campaign in spring 2000 with sold out "Last Chance" tours of the former Waterloo County Gaol. The Tours were a great boost to the garden campaign and an indication of the public's keen interest in these historic buildings. With the momentous decision of the Region to proceed with the redevelopment of the site, the garden project expanded. The original estimate of \$85,000 grew to \$185,000, including a portion set aside for future needs. The garden project now includes three adjacent areas to the Walled Garden: the Arbour Walkway, a Courtyard Garden, and Upper Terrace. Plans call for more shrubs and trees, paved walkways, a wrought iron arbour and obelisk, a History and Donor Wall to display the story of the county's birthplace, and a black granite seating bench engraved with the original crests of the founding villages and townships of Waterloo County. When the garden is completed in 2002, the official opening will be a rewarding and exciting experience for the Friends and for all who have helped the garden grow!

All four levels of government have come forward with financial support, as have foundations, corporate friends, garden societies and heritage-minded citizens. The North Waterloo Region Branch ACO has supported the preservation and adaptive re-use of these historic buildings since 1980 and has donated generously to the Friends'

millennium garden project.

Readers wishing to donate to the Waterloo County Gaol Garden can receive details from the Secretary-Treasurer, tel. (519) 744-3146 or email JHaalboom@aol.com. An income tax receipt will be issued for a donation of \$10 or more. Amounts of \$100 or more qualify donors for inscription of their names on the Donor Wall.

Joyce Arndt

Friends of the Governor's House and Gaol

205 Yonge Street, Toronto

In 1993 the Toronto Historical Board (at that time, the agency charged with the task of preserving the city's heritage) moved into an historic building in the downtown core. The city had obtained the former Toronto Dominion branch building at 205 Yonge Street after the branch closed in 1989. As part of the Theatre Block plan, the purchase sought to strengthen a cultural enclave in the block bounded by Queen, Yonge, Shuter and Victoria Streets. Sadly, the new Culture Division of the amalgamated City of Toronto is set to relocate and this earlier desire to establish a prominent presence for heritage in the city will be lost.

Originally designed as a branch for the Bank of Toronto, the building was erected in 1906. The Bank of Toronto (which later merged with the Dominion Bank in 1954 to form the Toronto Dominion Bank) was founded in 1855, and opened its doors for business in July 1856. The bank steadily grew to become one of the "most successful and businesslike" of all Canadian banks, as described in 1906 by Adam Shortt in his *History of Canadian Currency, Banking and Exchange*. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Bank of Toronto had 14 branch buildings across



Bank of Toronto, 205 Yonge Street
photo courtesy Toronto Reference Library

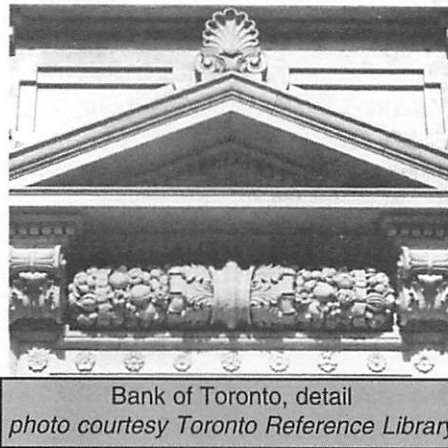
Ontario and Quebec. While no new branches were erected between 1892 and 1899, the bank profited from a favourable economic climate at the outset of the twentieth century and, between 1900 and 1906, 39 additional branch buildings were erected (in both Ontario and Quebec). Of that number, four were erected in Toronto in order to serve the city's growing needs – one being 205 Yonge Street just north of Queen Street.

Although this general area on Yonge is today a focus in the city centre, this was not the case earlier in Toronto's history. Indeed, King Street was the city's first major thoroughfare and, even as development shifted westward towards Yonge in the second half of the nineteenth century, the commercial and financial centre remained south of Queen. For banks the concentration was particularly at Wellington and King Streets. But due to certain developments, most notably Toronto's new City Hall at Queen and Bay Streets (which opened in 1899), and the Robert Simpson store at Queen and Yonge of 1894-95, the area north of Queen Street was fast becoming a conspicuous business centre. The Bank of

Commerce also capitalized on the burgeoning business centre by erecting a new branch in this vicinity. (This latter building now stands vacant directly south of 205 Yonge Street.)

The design of the Yonge Street branch was entrusted to one of the city's most prominent architects – E.J. Lennox. Lennox had just completed the nearby City Hall (a commission that occupied a good part of his career, from the mid-1880s to 1900). Demand for Lennox's architectural services after this prominent civic project is evident in his work on a number of buildings, which mark the Edwardian exuberance of the early twentieth century, including the King Edward Hotel (1901-03) and Casa Loma (1909-11). Due to the City Hall's presence and importance, Lennox's apparent devotion to the Richardsonian Romanesque style has come to dominate his career. Yet these other early twentieth century projects, including the Bank of Toronto branch building on Yonge, reveal the architect's ability to design in a range of styles – styles that are often dictated by the building type.

For the bank, Lennox produced a design based on the Beaux-Arts classicism so popular at the time. The use of classicism in any form (whether it be the neo-classicism of the mid-nineteenth century, or the Beaux-Arts classicism of the early twentieth century) has always been considered appropriate for financial institutions. Lennox designed a modern temple of commerce. The four giant Corinthian columns support a highly ornamented frieze, topped by a denticulated pediment with acroteria at the apex and ends of the pediment. The attic storey rises above the pediment revealing two round windows wrapped in classical wreaths. Capping the whole composition is a dome reminiscent of the Pantheon in Rome. Indeed, the Bank appears as a miniature Pantheon with temple front and dome compressed into a narrow city lot (as compared to the grand Roman example on an open piazza).



Bank of Toronto, detail
photo courtesy Toronto Reference Library

This type of design, which borrows its vocabulary from classical antiquity, was the basis of architectural training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Since the seventeenth century, the École had been one of the most influential training grounds for architects, and it continued to be so at the end of the nineteenth century. While Toronto-born Lennox never studied at the École in France, he was aware of the current fashion of design, particularly for grand public and institutional buildings in North America. When Toronto's Union Station was designed in the first decades of the twentieth century, the grand Beaux-Arts style was employed. This was also the style of choice for the Royal Alexandra Theatre on King Street West, designed in 1906. Both of these buildings were designed by John M. Lyle, a Canadian architect who had trained at the École.

In order to give the 1905 Bank of Toronto building added dignity and strength, Indiana limestone was used on the front façade; the less visible side elevations were built of brick, a less expensive material. Referred to as the "aristocrat of building materials" by an early twentieth century trade catalogue, limestone was considered appropriate, if not necessary, for a classically inspired design. In their catalogue dedicated to bank buildings, the Indiana Limestone Quarryman's Association included a full-page photograph of this Bank of Toronto branch, remarking that Canada was "no less progressive in her selection of building materials than in other matters." It is remarkable that in

an American publication, with only six full-page images, one would be this branch building.

The visitor to the bank enters by ascending a flight of stairs in the front portico. The impressive nature of the elegant temple façade continues on the interior. Entrance to the banking hall proper was originally gained through a hall lined with Italian marble. Today this hallway has been altered and no longer retains the marble, and the ladies' waiting room (which was located on the left upon entering) has been removed. The banking hall itself was a sumptuous room due mainly to the extensive use of marble. An arcade wraps around the room, with blind arches on three sides. The fourth wall has an arcade with an aisle beyond. The floor of mosaic marble tiles continues from the entrance hall into the banking room. The opulence of this room would have been even more overwhelming before the counters and teller's cages were removed.

The room was lit by four large round-arched windows on the south side. But even more natural light was emitted by means of three large, rectangular skylights set deep in the ornamental coved ceiling.

This type of lighting was made possible by using an innovative plan – one that the architects of Chicago in the late-nineteenth century had come to exploit to the fullest. The long, narrow building is designed in a shallow U-shaped plan, such that the upper floors wrap around the banking hall on the east, west and north sides only, leaving the area immediately above the hall open to daylight. The mezzanine, which is visible through the iron grilles at the top of the arcade on the north side of the banking hall, reveals the access along the northern section of this U-shaped plan. The remainder of the building was mainly given over to offices, short of the top floor, which housed the sleeping chambers for the bank clerks and the janitor (not an unusual accommodation in banks in the nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries).

When the Toronto Historical Board commissioned the restoration of the building in 1993, architects A.J. Diamond, Donald Schmidt and Company Architects, along with Taylor/Hazell Restoration Architects, were faced with a number of tasks. The first priority in the restoration was to make repairs that would stop further deterioration. Some of the sculpted limestone details had to be repaired, as did the roof. On the interior, restoration included the removal of drywall, false ceilings and floor tiles to reveal the original richness of the materials. Only then did the marble walls and mosaic floors reappear. The glass skylights were also restored. Thankfully, the original 1906 Otis elevator had never been removed or altered and it still ran up the front façade, allowing a view of Yonge Street as it passed the windows in the most northern bay of the facade (including the round window in the attic storey).

This elegant Beaux-Arts jewel was, and still is, a significant building in Toronto's history. The prosperity of the early twentieth century, coupled with Edwardian enthusiasm, resulted in a number of architectural embellishments in the city. By this time (1905), the Bank of Toronto was fifty years old and their branch building projected an aura of a permanent,

established institution. As was typical of bank architecture throughout history, buildings were designed to project a powerful, stable image in order to inspire customer confidence and public acknowledgement. One can only hope that the new user of this prominently located bank building will continue to appreciate the positive image that good architecture can generate for its occupants.

Sharon Vattay

Doors Open Ontario – coming soon!

The Ontario Heritage Foundation is spearheading the development of a new province-wide initiative – Doors Open Ontario (DOO).

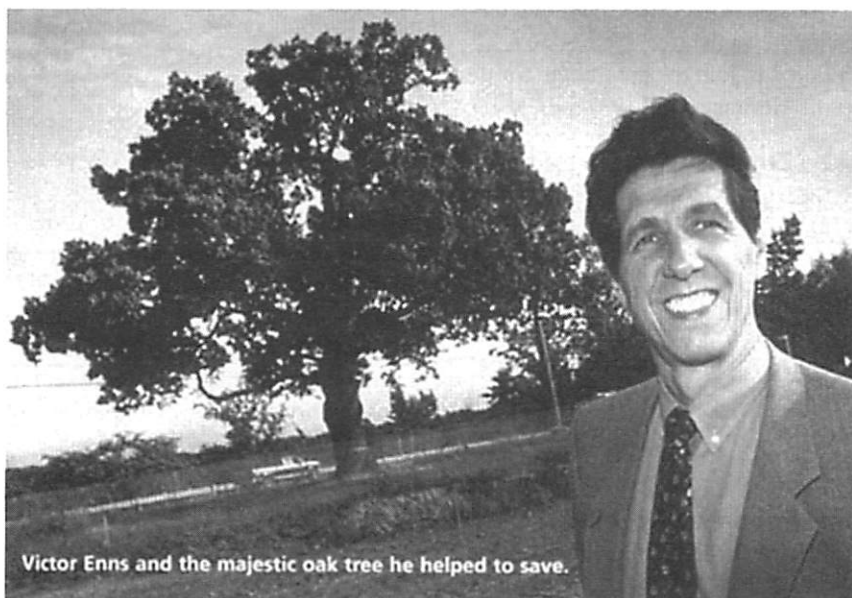
DOO is a community based celebration of built and cultural heritage with a launch planned for February 2002, to meet next year's tourist season. Based on highly successful Doors Open Toronto events from the past two years, about 12 to 15 Ontario communities will be participating in the demonstration year. In the following years more communities will be

involved.

Doors Open Ontario participating communities will open the doors of buildings of architectural and/or historic significance, many of which are generally closed to the public, free of charge. Heritage homes, estates, commercial buildings, court houses, places of worship, business offices, heritage schools and museums are among the fascinating buildings that may open their doors to the public, in addition to heritage gardens and natural heritage sites. DOO community events will be shaped by a wide range of community leaders from ACO chapters, municipalities, volunteers, heritage and tourism organizations.

As a province-wide heritage tourism initiative, Doors Open Ontario is intended to tap into the public's growing interest in heritage. A Doors Open Ontario 2002 Guide will be produced and a Doors Open Ontario Web site will be launched. Raising the awareness of community architectural heritage will help promote and ensure our community heritage is protected and enjoyed by new audiences and future generations.

If you wish further information, please contact the Foundation at marketing@heritagedn.on.ca



Victor Enns and the majestic oak tree he helped to save.

240-year-old oak tree saved from bulldozer

Earlier this year Oakville's Bronte Road residents Victor Enns and Dr. George Atkins, with the help of Halton regional chair Joyce Savoline, saved a 240-year-old oak tree.

Planted circa 1760, the tree's thick (15 foot) circumference supports a majestic form that stretches 75 feet in the air just north of Halton Region's Bronte Road headquarters.

Enns stood in front of a bulldozer to save the tree, believed to be among Oakville's oldest, if not the oldest, white oak tree.

Earlier, a farmhouse that also stood north of the regional headquarters, and which had long had a stable of horses, was torn down. A new \$9.2 million regional vehicle centre, ambulance headquarters, West Oakville ambulance station, and 180 parking spaces will be built on the 14.5 acre site.

The old oak stands on what used to be that decrepit old farmhouse's front yard. The 84-year-old Atkins, a member of the Order of Canada, grew up in the now demolished building. Atkins' family once owned much of the nearby Bronte Creek Provincial Park and Saw Whet Golf Club lands. Last year, Enns and Atkins, representing most of Bronte Road's ravine side residents, formed the Residents' Committee For A Safer & Greener Bronte Road. They secured a regional commitment to save the oak tree, but somehow bulldozers got inside its protective fencing.

Fortunately Enns spotted the missing fencing and busy bulldozers. "I stood in front of the bulldozer," said Enns, as Atkins came running. One call to regional chair Joyce Savoline untangled a situation that, Enns admitted, "was a little tense." It was put down to a "communication problem."

"That's a special tree to be preserved at all costs," confirmed regional realty services manager Don Williams.

Now, a large, heavy-duty fence surrounds the tree. And, with plans to widen Bronte Road from two lanes to four lanes, Enns' group is again out to preserve the tree. "If the road is widened, the tree will be right in the middle of it," said Enns, noting a 1970s development agreement with the Ontario government committed to save the tree. "Hydro lines were placed around the tree. More recently, water and sewer lines were tunneled under it as the water line goes up to Milton.

"I'm very much a keeper of the past. I was not born in Canada, so I can't show my past to my kids. I'm sensitive about what gets torn down," admitted Savoline. Atkins took what keepsakes he wanted before the old homestead was torn down. After years of renting by Ontario Realty Corporation, the house wasn't worth keeping, said Savoline. But the tree is worth preserving, said Savoline, whose office overlooks the property where horses, chickens, an invalid duck, and some very friendly dogs used to hang out.

"The road (Bronte Road) has to widen but the tree will stay. I'm not an engineer but engineers can do anything," said Savoline.

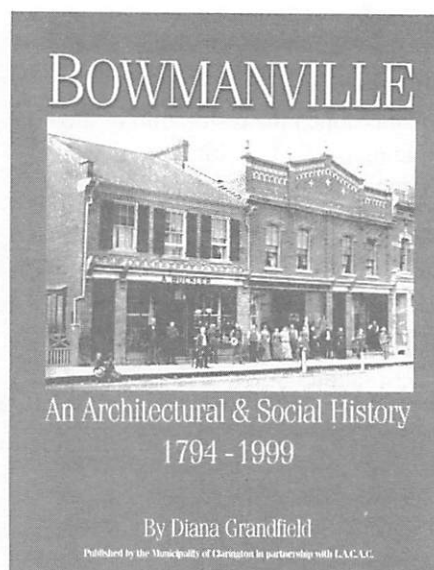
Meanwhile an arborist is caring for the tree. And though it can't be part of a median boulevard when Bronte Road expands, the new road could veer away from it and toward the ravine, then back to the west and away from the homes, she said.

Enns would like to see the expanded road separated by a treed median as exists on Dorval Drive south of Speers Road.

A bike path would also be nice and it would be heaven if the Oakville Heritage Trail could ultimately incorporate the old oak tree, said Enns, who envisions Oakville's symbolic oak when he views the tree. He has now been asked to join the committee for the Oakville Heritage Trail.

Enns noted other such trees in the United States have been legally protected – towering pin oaks that lead into the late Elvis Presley's Graceland mansion; a giant honey locust near which Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address; and, the towering post oak under which John F. Kennedy is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

From a report by Angela Blackburn in the Oakville Beaver



Old Bowmanville in text and pictures

Bowmanville, An Architectural & Social History, 1794-1999, by Diana Grandfield, is a book about heritage buildings in the former Town of Bowmanville (now part of the Municipality of Clarington).

The merchants and farmers who had the foresight to see the advantages of the natural resources in this area on the shores of Lake Ontario left behind a range of building styles and materials to be seen in the older streets. While many buildings have been preserved, a number of significant structures have been lost and others continue to be lost or changed almost beyond recognition. The author and publishers hope that this book will encourage both older and newer residents to continue to work towards preservation of the heritage left by those early settlers.

Published by the municipality in partnership with the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC), *Bowmanville, An Architectural & Social History* also contains information about the people who built the community and left behind this historic record.



Waverley Place
(Bowmanville Museum), one of the
many Bowmanville properties featured
in Diana Grandfield's book

The book is available from the Municipality, the Bowmanville Museum, Rickaby's The Book Studio in Bowmanville and the Village Card & Gift shop in Newcastle. Some bookstores outside of Clarington may also carry it.

The cost is \$29.95, plus GST.

The Threatened Churches of Essex County

Over a year ago now, the Roman Catholic Diocese of London approached three of its parishes in Essex County about the future of their churches. These were: Paroisse de l'Annonciation (1905), Pointe aux Roches; St. Joachim (1891), St. Joachim; and Paroisse de Notre Dame de Lourdes (1947), Comber.

The Church is facing a serious decline in the number of active parish priests, with a similar decline in attendance at Sunday Mass. As well, the Diocese had commissioned condition assessment studies on the three churches that indicated substantial costs for their renovations. As a result, the parishes, already participating in the recently established "clustering" movement that consolidates the parish functions under the direction of one priest, voted to abandon their historic churches in favour of building one new structure – without benefit of estimated costs, at an

as yet unnamed location, and seemingly without any plans or even preliminary drawings.

By the spring of 2001, however, a number of parishioners from the historic churches, having reconsidered this proposal, realized that the prospect of losing churches that were the centre of their communities – spiritual, cultural and familial – formed a group called "Save Our Sanctuaries" (SOS). They approached the Diocese, asking for a review of the earlier decision and a revote, since they disputed the manner of tallying the vote. They held public meetings to discuss their views and their hopes; they undertook an ambitious letter-writing campaign to the Bishop; they met with Auxiliary Bishop Grecco; and they recommended heritage designation of the two historic churches to the municipal councillors of Lakeshore (most of whom are members of these parishes).

They received the endorsement of Heritage Canada, other heritage organizations and the encouragement of the Windsor Branch of the ACO.

All to no avail. On October 2, with some 400 parishioners in attendance at the Paroisse de l'Annonciation, the Diocese made its position clear. The meeting was reported in the current issue of the Newsletter of the Diocese of London under the heading "Bishop tells parishioners to move forward with their decision on a new building":

Bishop John Sherlock exercised his decisive leadership at an Information meeting for three cluster parishes in Essex County.

He gave clear support to...all the members in the parish communities who have expressed their desire to build a new church to replace three existing buildings....

For decades the three parishes have been worshipping in beautiful buildings. The churches of Annunciation and St. Joachim are approximately 100 years old.

The fact of clustering and the fact that the buildings required extensive repair and renovation work forced the parishioners to examine their reality and make a decision....

Since early this year a group naming itself "Save our Sanctuaries" has tried various means to have the decision reversed, believing that the buildings have historical significance for the region....

...Bishop Sherlock stated, "The decision has been made. The time for dialogue and consultation has passed."

Fr. Adam...stated that the parish community may seem divided on the issue of new versus old, but I believe that the debate should not be about bricks and mortar, but about bringing people to God, and God to the people....

(Diocesan representatives) spoke about the process by which buildings and land are offered to potential buyers, (making) it clear that the Diocese will ensure that the properties are used in a way that is consistent with the values and beliefs of the Catholic Church.

Unfortunately the Diocese of London seems to be oblivious to the sense of the sacredness of place represented by these buildings and the need to honour generations past for their labour, sacrifice and celebration of their faith in constructing and maintaining these now historic churches. The Diocese has dismissed requests for ACO Advisory Board reports to be conducted on these and other diocesan properties. Too often they disregard knowledgeable, critical analysis of their sites.

While there was a cordial meeting of ACO representatives with the auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General, the Diocese has not been especially receptive or responsive to those among us who have reminded them that these churches are repositories of the historicity of faith and rich French Canadian culture of southwestern Ontario; that they are not just bricks and mortar. While there are

some diocesan owned designated properties, sadly the Diocese is not known for its understanding of heritage principles or philosophy and how to apply them to their own properties.

Certainly the Church faces challenges in a changing world where there is a shortage of parish clergy, decline in attendance and the associated fall off in offering revenue, and a stock of unnecessary churches and related buildings. The problems is that, in this Diocese at least, and likely elsewhere as well, there appears to be an arbitrariness in decision-making regarding what buildings are to be demolished or to undergo a building campaign. It often seems that – at the whim of the parish priest – here a listed historic rectory is demolished or there an unnecessary and inappropriate addition is constructed, without adequate regard for the historicity of the site or the neighbourhood context.

Why does the Church seem blasé about the feelings of many of its own, not to mention the neighbourhood and others regarding the significance of these historic churches? Might not the Diocese consider working together with local members and others to find solutions to these issues – solutions that recognize the value and connectedness in these historic, rural French Canadian centres. The Diocese might come to a new awareness and appreciation of its own rich diversity and realize that its role as steward of a precious built heritage is not antithetical to addressing the needs of today.

A local French Canadian cultural organization has expressed interest in acquiring the churches of St. Joachim and l'Annonciation; but, as yet, no response has been forthcoming from the Diocese. This group would have respect for these church buildings and would work to ensure their continued use in a way that complements their past. Retaining and reusing these structures in a manner that is sensitive to their history as the religious centre of their communities does not diminish their original purpose, but rather reminds us



Paroisse de l'Annonciation (1905),
Pointe aux Roches
photo: David Tremblay

of their vitality and ongoing contribution to and significance in daily life – “bringing people to God.”

Unlike Quebec, where there has been a longstanding appreciation for the traditions, the edifices, the cultural as well as the religious significance of sacred places, the Church in Ontario too often is inclined to dismiss the historic and its enrichment of life, instead buying into the theory that “new is better.” In Quebec there have been a number of initiatives to protect religious heritage – dioceses set up committees for construction and art. These keep an inventory and review heritage artifacts and structures of individual parishes with the pastor, in an effort to ensure the preservation of significant resources and features.

Since 1983, there has been a Quebec Religious Heritage Foundation that is inclusive, bringing together members of nearly all faith traditions in the province. In 1995, the Ministère de la Culture et des Communications du Québec established a major program to conserve and in some instances provide for adaptive use of the religious heritage of the province. Since that time, the provincial government has granted more than \$100 million for restoration of religious heritage buildings and artifacts. The Religious Heritage Foundation manages this

program for the province, recommending “recourse to competent heritage specialists to evaluate the appropriateness of any work that might modify the nature of a heritage property.”

It is tragic that in this province we are not yet so organized; it is incumbent on us to become more assertive regarding our religious heritage. Ontario needs the support of government in a program like Quebec’s in order to encourage the religious traditions to value and conserve their heritage.

As for the three threatened churches of Essex County, it is not too late. We must urge the Diocese to reconsider its decision and help find a solution that would save these “spired” places from the wrecker’s ball.

Mary Angela Tucker

A Reflection on the Essex County Churches

I grew up in Winnipeg and visited occasionally a charming church decorated with elegant carved wood paneling and wainscoting. Years later in the 1950s our family moved to that parish and I noticed something had changed. Little of that wondrous detailing remained.

What happened was the result of the overreaction of a zealous steward to the new liturgical requirement for the priest to face the congregation during Mass – instead of merely moving the altar table a few feet from the wall, most of the high altar was removed. Similar callous treatment of church interiors scoured countless places of worship so dearly loved and paid for by the faithful.

Although not born or raised in Southwestern Ontario I was intrigued



St. Joachim (1891), St. Joachim
photo: David Tremblay

by the interesting history of the French Canadian presence in the small rural towns of Essex County. Their stunning tall steepled churches with their old graveyards beside them reflect a story connecting pioneer days to the present. The rites of passage of all the families are so clearly connected to these sites even today. Yet, once again these cultural icons are facing annihilation. Why?

These French Canadian communities are the homes and farms of the descendants of the early French settlers who were brought to the narrows of the Detroit River and organized into a French settlement by Cadillac in 1701. As Detroit grew, their children and grandchildren moved to the south shore (where Windsor is today) and moved further east along Lake St. Clair to found places like Pointe aux Roches, and, inland, St. Joachim and Comber. All this French Canadian history and its connection to Southwestern Ontario is being assaulted and destroyed by those who think they have the right to demolish the sacred architecture of these communities.

They don't have the right; they simply have the power to do so. Do important cultural centres deserve this cavalier treatment? No.

Ann Marie MacLennan

Letter to the Editor

The Trustees of Chiefswood National Historic Site are seeking suggestions from any and all interested parties on how we can raise funds for the continued operation of Chiefswood.

We feel that Parks Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Culture have been extremely generous in providing advice and dollars to restore Chiefswood. It is now up and running very nicely, with one serious problem. We are perennially short of operating capital. In fact, our long range goal is to establish an endowment, the income from which we can use for the operation of the museum with its manifold educational objectives.

Chief George Henry Martin Johnson built Chiefswood as his home. Chief Johnson was a martyr who died prematurely as a result of his opposition to the exploitation of his people, the Six Nations of the Grand River, especially through the illicit liquor trade. (Twice he was beaten by thugs and left for dead, but managed to crawl home to Chiefswood, where he died sometime after the second beating.)

His daughter, Emily Pauline Johnson, became the first great woman poet in Canada. She was also one of the greatest early feminists, asserting the

rights and talents of her gender and her native heritage. She was deeply concerned with the preservation of the gifts which the Creator gave to us – the land with all its flora and fauna.

We trustees feel it would be a violation of the heritage so dear to Chief Johnson and his daughter, Pauline, for us to seek financing derived from either the liquor trade or gambling, both of which we see as commonly (although not by definition) abusive of the weaker members of society.

In this vein, we humbly seek suggestions as to how we may procure ethically acceptable funds to operate and endow Chiefswood.

Please contact Paula Whitlow, Curator, Chiefswood National Historic Site, P.O. Box 640, Ohsweken, ON N0A 1M0, Telephone (519) 752-5005, Fax (519) 752-9578, Email CHIEFS@EXECULINK.COM (With all these telephone numbers, it is interesting to note that the world's first bilingual long distance phone conversation took place when Dr. Bell telephoned long distance from Brantford to Chiefswood, and Chief Johnson answered in the Mohawk tongue.)

Thank you.

Michael J. Keefe,
Trustee, Chiefswood NHS

Fort York threatened by Forest of High Rise Towers

The Friends of Fort York are appealing for financial contributions to the legal defense of Fort York. In spite of an exhaustive process in 1994 which built in strict height controls into the Part II plan for the new neighbourhood south of Fort York, Toronto City planners have recommended to City Council that an Official Plan amendment be approved which would allowed at least three 30-40 storey condominium towers in the

new neighbourhood south of the fort. The Friends of Fort York have analyzed the proposals and estimate that if the application of H&R Properties is approved, then other developers could create as many as eleven copy cat towers.

The Friends of Fort York were parties at a hearing at the Ontario Municipal Board starting November 13. The volunteer organization is faced with raising upwards of \$40,000 to defend the City of Toronto's Official Plan.

If you can help with these costs please send a charitable donation to:
Friends of Fort York,
Attention Joe Gill,
Suite 1510, 1 First Canadian Place,
P.O. Box 19, Toronto, ON, M5X 1A9.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
Suite 204, 10 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1J3

